

Application No.: 09/590,925

Case No.: 55416US002

Remarks

Claims 1-13, 16 and 25-40 have been cancelled. Claims 14, 15, 17-24, and 41-73 are pending. Claims 14, 15, 17-21, 24, and 41-48 have been allowed. Claims 22, 23, and 49-73 stand rejected.

Objection to Specification

In the Office Action, the Amendment filed 7/28/2003 was objected to under 35 U.S.C. 132 for allegedly introducing new matter into the disclosure. The Office Action states:

The added material which is not supported by the original disclosure is as follows: (1) the newly added claim limitations regarding substantial transparency (claims 49, 52, 57, 59 67, 69); (2) the newly added claim limitations regarding shrinkage up to about 3.88% (claim 69).

§ 112 Rejection of Claims 49-73

Claims 49-73 stand rejected under 35 USC § 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The Office Action states:

See the reasons for the objection to the amendment filed 7/28/03 under 35 USC 132 as stated above. Applicant is required to point out with specificity any purported support for the claim language in question.

Applicants' Response:

Support for the claim limitations regarding substantial transparency (claims 49, 52, 57, 59 67, 69) can be found, for example, on page 2, lines 24-27 and page 9, lines 19-23. With regard to the limitation in claim 69 of "up to 3.88% in an in-plane direction upon heating", the present application, on page 22, lines 13-14, expressly states that the film shrinkage can be less than about 3% in both in-plane directions. In addition, sample #2-2, in Table 2, exhibited shrinkage in the transverse direction (TD) of 3.887%. Therefore, the term "about 3%" clearly includes the shrinkage of 3.887%. As a result, there is no need to expressly recite "3.88%" in claim 69.

Application No.: 09/590,925Case No.: 55416US002

Claim 69 has been amended accordingly. With these remarks and amendment it is submitted that this §112 rejection of claims 49-73 has been overcome.

§ 112 Rejection of Claims 22-23

Claims 22-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The Office Action states:

Claims 22-23 are unclear and confusing because they appear somewhat inconsistent with claim 20, which specifies a maximum shrinkage of 3.887% in an in-plane direction. If Applicant is attempting to claim the shrinkage in a different in-plane direction, appropriate language (e.g., "in a second in-plane direction", etc.) should be used.

Applicants' Response:

There is more than one in-plane direction. Claim 20 recites a maximum shrinkage "in an in-plane direction". Claims 22 and 23 each recite a minimum shrinkage "in at least one in-plane direction". This minimum shrinkage may be exhibited in the same in-plane direction as that of the maximum shrinkage recited in claim 20. Alternatively, this minimum shrinkage may be exhibited in a different in-plane direction than that of the maximum shrinkage recited in claim 20. It is submitted that the minimum shrinkages recited in claims 22 and 23 do not have to be limited to any particular in-plane direction in order to satisfy the definiteness requirements of §112. Accordingly, this §112 rejection should be withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 14-15, 17-21, 24, 41-48 are allowable over the prior art of record. Claims 22-23 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Application No.: 09/590,925

Case No.: 55416US002

Applicants' Response:

Applicants appreciate the finding of allowable subject matter in the present application. It is submitted that in light of the above remarks and amendments all of the above rejections have been overcome and claims 14, 15, 17-24 and 41-73 are in condition for allowance.

Conclusion

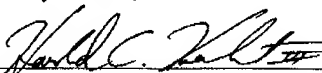
In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the status of the application is requested, and the allowance of claims 14-15, 17-24, and 41-73, as amended, at an early date is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

1/16/04

By:



Harold C. Knecht III, Reg. No.: 35,576

Telephone No.: (651) 575-1056

Office of Intellectual Property Counsel
3M Innovative Properties Company
Facsimile No.: 651-736-3833